



PRICE OF SAFETY
Vehicle owners say setting up tracking device, emergency buttons imposing financial burden on them
PAGE 3



TAXING TIME
Properties of defaulters to be sealed to send out strong message that tax evasion will not be tolerated
PAGE 5

Command centre for Safety Islands received over 50 actionable calls between June 2023 and August 2024, contrasted by a staggering 2,500 prank alerts during the same period

THIS IS NOT A DRILL

During initial 6 months no woman or child used kiosks to seek help

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Bengaluru's 'Safety Islands', blue telephone booth-like structures equipped with surveillance cameras and emergency communication systems, have received over 90 actionable calls in 2024, of which 70 were actionable alerts in the last six months. However, these legitimate calls were overshadowed by over 3,000 prank alerts, highlighting significant misuse of the system.

Introduced under the Safe City project funded by the Nirbhaya scheme, the initiative aims to enhance public safety, especially for women and vulnerable groups. The first phase of the project was launched in March 2023 with the installation of 30 Safety Islands in high-footfall areas frequented by women. By October 2024, the network had expanded to 50 locations identified as potential crime hot-spots.

Alarming misuse
Despite their intended purpose, officials have noted instances of misuse, including prank calls
CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 >>



Whether it's a public dispute or a life-threatening situation like a fire or stabbing, the system ensures immediate action. Each call is treated with utmost seriousness — Staff member

The deed is not done

Absence of guidelines to implement Registration Act is leaving victims of fraudulent registration of sale deeds without any recourse



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The delay in issuing guidelines to implement the Registration (Karnataka Amendment) Act, 2023 has been causing a lot of problems for the victims of fraudulent registration of sale deeds based on fake documents. Nothing has been done to mitigate the woes of the victims so far.

The government amended the Registration Act, 1908, in 2023 and the Registration (Karnataka Amendment) Act, 2023 got the President's approval in October 2024. The new Act empowers the District Registrars to cancel the sale deeds registered based on fake documents. However, complainants have been waiting for more than a year to get their grievances redressed due to the delay in issuing the guidelines for the effective implementation of the Act.

As per the 2023 Act, the District Registrar can take action either suo motu or on a complaint received from any aggrieved person. If they believe that the registration of a document is made in contravention of Section 22-B they shall issue a notice to the executants and all the parties to the document to show cause as to why the registration of the document shall not be cancelled. On the consideration of the reply, the District Registrar may cancel the registration of the document and cause it to enter

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 >>

 THINGS TO DO
01 Mesmerising melodies

 Sanjay Divecha Trio
Live at Windmills.

Celebrate an evening filled with soul-stirring melodies and breathtaking improvisations with

Sanjay Divecha, one of India's most celebrated guitarists and composers, featuring Adrian D'souza on drums and Shashank Das on bass.

Where: Windmills, Whitefield; When: January 10 & 11, 9:30 pm onwards


02 Trip planners...any queries?

 Free expert guidance on national and international tours by Adigas Yatra (R): Interact with seasoned experts and gain insights into planning memorable tours across India and abroad. The event is open to all. **Where & When:** Kassia Building (above D-Mart), near Hosahalli Metro Station, Vijayanagar on January 12, 10 am to 3 pm; #144, Durga Mansion, DVG Road, Basavanagudi on January 13, 10 am to 6 pm

03 Lohri delights

 Celebrate Lohri in its truest sense—a journey of flavours, culture, and tradition at Loya, where the vibrant essence of Northern culture unfolds through a feast steeped in heritage. **Where:** LOYA at Taj West End, Bengaluru; **When:** January 13 and 14, 12:30 pm to 3:30 pm & 7 to 11:30 pm

04 Short plays

 Jo Peechhe Rah Jaate Hain, a soul-stirring play from KALAYAN written & directed by Mathura Kalauny. It is a compelling collage of two short plays united by a shared theme of sacrifice and resilience. **Where:** Prabhat Kaladwaraka, Koramangala **When:** January 10, 5 pm & 7:30 pm

05 Groovy tunes

 Songwriter Sessions with Ranj X Clifr and Yatharth Bakshi. Ranj & Clifr form a pop/hip-hop/RnB duo rooted in the vibrant musical scene of Bengaluru. Yatharth is a 22-year-old part of the emerging Indian indie sound, a cross between 2000s rock and the modern-day alt-indie, and is a breath of fresh air. **Where:** PizzaExpress, Koramangala; **When:** January 11, 8 pm onwards

Delayed orders leave eligible principal candidates in limbo

400+ degree colleges in state function without full-time principals; while some say selection process followed established rules, others approach Court to challenge it

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Despite the completion of the selection process for filling principal vacancies in Karnataka's government first-grade colleges over a year ago, the state government has yet to issue appointment orders, leaving eligible candidates in limbo. If all had gone according to plan, Grade 1 principals should have taken charge at government first-grade colleges across the state at the start of the academic year 2024-25. However, procedural delays and ambiguities have hindered the appointments even after the final merit list was published on March 5, 2024.

Decade-long wait for principals

Sources said that for the past decade, 438 government first-grade colleges in the state have been functioning without full-time principals, with in-charge officers

Key figures

- 438:** Government colleges in Karnataka
- 400:** Vacant principal positions
- 310:** Positions for which applications were invited
- 954:** Candidates who appeared for exam
- 22:** Retirements by December 2024



'The final list was released in March 2024 for 310 vacant principal positions, yet appointment orders are still pending'

handling the responsibilities. In December 2022, the state government invited applications for 310 vacant positions, followed by an examination in July 2023. The merit list was published in December 2023, and the final list was released in March 2024. Yet, appointment orders remain pending.

Concerns over tenure & career prospects

A lecturer said, "The position of principal is limited to a five-year term, with an option for a five-year extension based on performance. The merit list includes candidates with 10-15 years of

service remaining, raising concerns that they may have to seek alternative employment once their tenure ends. Additionally, several eligible candidates have already retired, with 22 having retired on December 31, 2024. By 2025, 41 more will retire, followed by 52 in 2026, leaving several posts vacant again."

The selection process has drawn mixed reactions. Some argue that engineering college faculty and guest lecturers from private colleges included in the merit list may face challenges in teaching arts and commerce subjects. Others counter that the selection process followed estab-

lished rules, and merit-based appointments are justified.

Legal hurdles

Adding to the delay, some individuals have approached the High Court to challenge the recruitment process. Allegations have surfaced that in-charge principals who failed to secure merit list ranks are among those seeking to stall the appointments. "I topped the merit list

“Prolonged delay has not only affected college administration but also morale of candidates awaiting their appointments”

— Senior lecturer

for the principal's post, and yet, even after adhering to UGC norms, the government has delayed issuing appointment orders for over a year. This delay is unacceptable, and the process must be expedited," said a faculty member who wished to remain anonymous. Another senior lecturer added, "The prolonged delay has not only affected the administration of colleges but also the morale of candidates who have been awaiting their appointments. Stakeholders urge the government to resolve the issue promptly to ensure smooth academic functioning in the state's higher education institutions."

Paediatric emergency bay: Prompt, expert care for little patients

Manipal Hospital Whitefield has introduced a dedicated Paediatric Emergency Bay as part of its emergency department to improve medical care for children. This facility focuses on addressing the specific needs of young patients while providing timely medical attention.

The inauguration featured a ribbon-cutting ceremony by child artist and reality show winner Vanshika Anjani Kashyap, accompanied by the hospital's medical team, led by Dr Ravi Shankar Swami, Consultant-Neonatology and Paediatrics. Dr Swami shared details about the new service and emphasised the hospital's commitment to enhancing healthcare



for children.

The facility includes a separate area with cartoon-themed walls to create a more welcoming environment for children, and a paediatrician is available around the clock to provide immediate care. "I was nervous about visiting the hospital, but the paediatric emergency room felt different. The environment was comforting, and the



staff was very kind. The cartoon designs made it feel less like a hospital," said Kashyap.

Dr Swami explained, "We manage a large number of emergencies every year, and paediatric cases require specific care. This new facility ensures that children feel supported, and parents receive quick and expert attention." The facility integrates a "box-in-box" model, providing direct access to advanced imaging services and specialists in cardiology, neurosurgery, orthopaedics, and other fields, eliminating the need for external referrals or transfers. —BMB

Create fear-free atmosphere for common man: CM tells police

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has urged police to create a sense of fear among criminals while ensuring a fear-free environment for common people. Speaking after inaugurating newly-constructed police stations and offices in Chamara-jpet, Cubbon Park, and High Grounds, as well as new police housing complexes in Pulakeshinagar in Bengaluru, CM Siddaramaiah emphasised the role of the police department in ensuring peace and safety in the state.

He issued a strong



Inaugural ceremony of Chamara-jpet police station building

warning against collusion between the police and the real estate mafia. "The government will not tolerate police officers supporting the real estate mafia under any circumstances. Create a sense of fear among criminals while ensuring ordinary citizens

feel safe," he said.

"The population of the state has crossed seven crore. Protecting the lives, property, and dignity of these people while creating a safe and peaceful environment is the responsibility of the police department. The government is always ready to provide the necessary facilities and establish new police stations to support this mission," The CM said. He urged the police to adopt a people-friendly approach and treat visitors to the police station with respect and care. —IANS

Step towards safety proves too steep for vehicle owners

Vehicle owners say cost to set up devices adds up to Rs 17,000 per vehicle, and they are forced to buy it from few chosen companies

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The State Government has mandated the installation of AIS-140-approved Vehicle Location Tracking Devices (VLTs) and emergency panic buttons in all public service vehicles, including taxis and cabs. This move aims to enhance the safety of women and children under the Nirbhaya framework, but it has ended up imposing a financial burden upon the vehicle owners.

The Central Government's Automotive Industry Standard (AIS-140) was introduced to standardise GPS-based tracking devices and emergency buttons nationwide. The Karnataka Transport Department implemented this measure to ensure real-time tracking of vehicles and prompt responses to emergencies. Panic buttons in these vehicles are designed to send alerts in cases of harassment, speeding, or other emergencies.

To operationalise this mandate, the Karnataka government empaneled 12 companies to supply AIS-140-certified VLTs. These companies, including Volty IoT Solutions and Nippon Audiophonix, were selected through a tender process. The devices are priced competitively at ₹7,599 (excluding GST).



The safety button, tracking device aim to make commutes safer

However, vehicle owners claim the overall cost, including installation, subscription fees, and maintenance, amounts to ₹17,000 per vehicle, making it a significant financial strain.

Radhakrishna Holla, commercial vehicle operator, expressed frustration. "We have been using GPS trackers for 15 years. Now, we must switch to these certified devices at exorbitant costs. The government has limited us to a few companies that charge as they wish. For one vehicle, we're paying ₹2,500 annually for subscriptions, plus GST and handling charges. For operators like me with 40-50 vehicles, this becomes a massive burden," he said.

He further explained that while safety measures are essential, the high costs and restricted vendor choices are unjustified. They highlighted that alternative methods, such as the existing 112 emergency

response system, already provide safety solutions. The government's decision to exclusively empanel 12 companies has also led to allegations of market favoritism. "We are not allowed to purchase from other companies other than enrolled. Only a few companies have enrolled. This looks like the government has created a market for few companies," Holla added.

Meanwhile, the government has emphasised the need for these devices to ensure uniform safety standards. The scheme mandated the installation of AIS-140 devices by November 30, 2024. Vehicle owners are required to renew their qualification certificates with proof of installation.

According to Holla, for an ordinary vehicle, such costs are too high. "After two years, we'll still have to pay whatever charges they impose, making it an ongoing burden. This offers no real benefit to us; it's primarily for government tracking. We've agreed to follow the

“We have been using trackers for 15 years. Now, we must switch to certified devices at exorbitant costs

—Radhakrishna Holla, vehicle owner

rules and have been complying, but paying ₹17,000 for an SUV is just too much.”

The implementation was relatively easier for government-owned vehicles like BMTC buses, which face lower financial impact. However, private vehicle operators demand similar concessions, arguing that they also operate under tight margins. While the initiative aims to safeguard passengers, particularly women and children, its success will depend on addressing the financial concerns of vehicle operators. BM tried to reach out to Transport Department officials, but they remained unavailable.

Teacher arrested for eloping with minor student

The JP Nagar police have arrested a private tutor, who is accused of eloping with a 15-year-old Class 10 student. The student was rescued after a month-and-a-half from Malavalli, Mandya.

The girl had gone for tuition as usual on November 23 and did not return home even at night. According to the police, the girl's parents grew suspicious when she went missing and approached the tutor Abhishek Gowda's house, only to find it locked. They immediately filed a complaint at JP Nagar police station, prompting an investigation.

The accused, a 25-year-old, hailing from Doddasathenahalli, Kanakapura, had been living separately from his wife and child in a rented house near Sarakki, JP Nagar. He was working as nutritionist. The accused is a diploma holder and had been taking tuitions for students from Class 1 to 10 for the past six years, including the victim.

Upon inspecting the locked house, police discovered that Abhishek had left his mobile phone behind. This confirmed suspicions that he had absconded with the minor girl. A special team was formed to track the accused, but he avoided detection by refraining from making any financial transactions or using his mobile phone.

After extensive searches and a lookout notice issued to all police stations, a cash reward of ₹25,000 was announced for information leading to Abhishek's arrest. A breakthrough came when a local resident in Malavalli, recognised the accused from the notice and informed the landlord of the house where Abhishek was staying.

The landlord alerted JP Nagar police, who raided the location and apprehended Abhishek. The girl was rescued and brought back to Bengaluru. Police officials revealed that Abhishek had withdrawn money beforehand to avoid tracking and had been living discreetly with the minor in a rented house. The accused is now in judicial custody, while the girl has been placed in a government orphanage. — BMB

ED examines BBMP records amid corruption probe

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A day after the Enforcement Directorate (ED) inspected the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) office, Chief Commissioner Tushar Girinath clarified on Wednesday that the exercise was a document verification process, not a raid. "ED officials, equipped with a search warrant, were granted access to documents as per due procedure," Girinath explained, while addressing the media. "These documents, related to the case, will be provided under my acknowledgment, ensuring full cooperation with the investigation," he said.

The ED has intensified its probe under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002, into alleged large-scale corruption involv-



ing BBMP officials and contractors. The investigation focuses on Joint Commissioners, Chief Engineers, Executive Engineers, Corporators, and Contractors from five BBMP zones: Dasarahalli, Mahadevapura, Rajarajeshwari Nagar, Yelahanka, and Bommanahalli.

This investigation stems from a 2020 First Information Report (FIR) filed by the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) following a complaint by former BBMP councillor and BJP leader NR Ramesh. Speaking to the media on Tuesday, Ramesh revealed that his complaint, lodged on June 16,

2020, detailed irregularities in the drilling of borewells and installation of Reverse Osmosis (RO) water treatment plants. The projects, implemented between 2016 and 2019, were intended to provide safe drinking water in areas without access to Cauvery water supply.

Ramesh alleged that over ₹400 crore out of the ₹970 crore allocated for the projects were misappropriated. "This is a multi-crore scam, and due to its magnitude, the ACB referred the case to the ED for further investigation," he stated.

On Tuesday, a team of seven ED officials conducted an inspection at the BBMP headquarters, focusing on securing records related to borewell drilling and stormwater drainage projects.

Sources indicate the ED has requested detailed documentation, including personal identification

“This is a multi-crore scam, and due to its magnitude, the ACB referred the case to the ED for further investigation

—NR Ramesh

details of the complainant, names, addresses, and contact details of suspected officials and contractors, zone-wise data on borewell drilling and RO unit installations, evidence of irregularities, and financial records pointing to fund misappropriation.

The ED is expected to summon key officials and contractors involved in the case for further questioning, aiming to uncover the extent of fund diversion and hold those responsible to account.

Step by step: Whitefield's walkway revival begins

Pilot project near Nallurahalli Metro Station aims to transform 4 km of footpaths, with 400 m already cleared, repaired, and beautified to improve last-mile metro connectivity

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A 4-kilometre stretch of footpaths around Nallurahalli Metro Station is undergoing a major transformation as part of a pilot project in Whitefield. The project's goal is to create pedestrian-friendly footpaths near metro stations. Arun Pai of Bangalore Walks highlighted the poor condition of footpaths in the area through a video showcasing a 400-metre stretch from Nallurahalli Metro Station to the Tesco campus. "The construction material is dumped on the footpaths, slabs are broken, and stones and kerbs are scattered all over," he pointed out. The stretch also has overgrown shrubs, fallen tree branches, and temporary shelters put up by individuals, forcing pedestrians to walk on the busy roads, risking their safety.

Arun said, "The quality of infrastructure is very bad. Many people use this metro station, including residents from nearby housing areas, IT professionals, and people visiting top companies and apartments. If footpaths are walkable, people will use them, but currently, they're in terrible shape." In the last two weeks, volunteers from The Ugly Indians, supported by the Mahadevapura Task Force, have cleaned and repaired the 400-metre stretch of footpath. Funded through a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model, this initiative is guided by The Ugly Indians as knowledge partners, promoting pedestrian-friendly access to metro stations. The repair work included clearing construction debris, fixing 15 missing footpath



The repairs involved clearing debris, replacing 15 footpath slabs, trimming weeds, and beautifying area with paints



slabs, cutting overgrown weeds, and painting and beautifying the area. "The first 400 metres have shown good results. We are now working towards reclaiming the entire 4-kilometre stretch. The target is to make the area walkable and safer for pedestrians," Arun added.

The success of the initial 400 metres has inspired the community to expand the project. "We have a community of more than 1,000 people who are coming forward to help discover safe walking spaces. We aim to improve pedestrian infrastructure

from Phoenix Mall to Hope Farm in Whitefield, covering 10-15 kilometres in the future," he said. Arun emphasised the larger goal of reclaiming footpaths across Bengaluru. "Construction sites often block footpaths with materials, causing problems. In Nallurahalli, we asked construction teams to clear the materials within a week, fix missing slabs, and beautify the space. Now, people are using it," he said.

Arun stressed the importance of creating pedestrian-friendly infrastructure for metro commuters.

City has lot of underutilised infrastructure. We have to work towards fixing it – Arun P, Bangalore Walks

"Even for a 1-kilometre distance, many pedestrians take autos to avoid footpaths as the infrastructure is not walkable. If we provide them with good footpaths, they will walk," he said. He also pointed out the significance of integrating pedestrian mobility with public transport. "Opposite the metro station is a BMTC (Bangalore Metropolitan Transport Corporation) depot. Many people come from there, and last-mile pedestrian mobility is crucial, apart from metro feeder buses. Bengaluru has a lot of underutilised infrastructure. If we work towards fixing it, we can make a big difference," Arun said. The ongoing efforts aim to create safe and accessible spaces for commuters.

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Path encroachment

BTM Layout



A permanent structure has encroached on the footpath at 5th Cross Road, Stage 2, BTM Layout, opposite Kuvempu Park, blocking pedestrian passage and causing inconvenience.

Gutter unfixed

Muneshwara Temple



The gutter at Spice Garden Skywalk, near Muneshwara Temple, has been unrepaired for over two years.

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E- AUCTION NOTICE

The intending bidders are invited to participate the E-Auction for cutting and removal of 11 Nos. of Eucalyptus trees at **Air Force Station Yelahanka, Bangalore** will be conducted through E-Auction portal (www.eauction.gov.in) on **20.01.2025** between **1200 hours on 1700 hours**.

The intending bidders are requested to visit the above-mentioned E-Auction website and follow the instructions for creating/registering profile for bidding. Terms and conditions of the sale are available in the Public Auction Notice. The participants may download the same from the website mentioned above and submit a Demand Draft/Banker's Cheque for **Rs. 9,000/- (Rupees Nine Thousand only)** in favors of **Defence Estates Officer, Karnataka Circle, Bangalore** as Earnest Money Deposit to this office for participating the auction on or before **16.01.2025 By 1730 hours**, failing which they will not be allowed to participate in the auction. Bid auto extension will be 10 minutes.

BAN/LANDS/113/E-AUC/AF/II/ Defence Estates Officer
Station: Bangalore.Dated: 06 Jan, 2025. Karnataka Circle, Bangalore

Minister promises advance, but ASHAs to continue protest

Following the ASHA workers protest, Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao announced that the government is ready to provide an advance of Rs 9,500 to the workers, replacing the current fixed honorarium of Rs.8,000. The announcement came during his visit to the protest site at Freedom Park, where ASHA workers have been staging an agitation. The minister appealed to the workers to end their protest and cooperate in delivering healthcare services.

During the protest, ASHA workers demanded a fixed monthly salary of Rs 15,000. Responding to their demands, he clarified that ASHA workers currently receive a fixed honorarium of Rs 8,000, with additional incentives provided based on central government grants. These incentives are linked to the activities recorded in the RCH (Reproductive and Child Health) portal. On average,



ASHA workers earn around Rs 9,500 per month, including the honorarium and incentives.

He added, "Converting incentives into a fixed monthly salary is difficult at pre-

sent as the incentives depend on central government grants, which are disbursed based on the activities recorded in the RCH portal. The exact amount of these grants cannot be guaranteed. However, we are ready to provide Rs.9,500 as an advance, which will later be adjusted based on the incentives received."

He stated that the government is considering an honorarium hike in the upcoming state budget. "Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has shown a positive outlook toward increasing the honorarium for ASHA workers. A decision will likely be made in this year's budget. I urge ASHA workers to end their protest and collaborate with the department in delivering healthcare services," he said.

However, the ASHA workers are sticking on to their demand of honorarium of Rs 15,000 and have decided to continue their protest.

— BMB

KREIS schools adopt HAM radios for disaster readiness

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The Karnataka Residential Educational Institutions Society (KREIS) has established HAM radio stations in 20 residential schools across the state, offering students and teachers a unique opportunity to connect with amateur radio operators worldwide. This initiative not only enhances learning but also prepares these schools to serve as communication hubs during natural disasters.

HAM radio, also known as amateur radio, has proven its importance in emergencies, particularly when conventional communication systems

fail. SK Mahadeva, Assistant Engineer and Nodal Officer for HAM at KREIS, said, "During natural disasters like landslides, HAM radio becomes a vital tool for communication. Our schools, located in remote areas, can be cut off during such events. These HAM stations will act as emergency communication centres."

Some of the schools that have established the HAM station are, MDRS BC (Morarji Desai Residential School) 01 Adakamaranahalli in Bengaluru Urban, MDRS BC 05 Sulibele, Bengaluru Rural, MDRS BC 224 Yadawad in Belgavi district, Dr BR Ambedkar Residential School Chintamani Chikkaballapur, MDRS Hirewaddatti in Gadag district and more.



To make this initiative successful, the Indian Institute of HAM has trained teachers and students. Since the training began in November 2024, 40 teachers and 20 students have obtained HAM licenses after clearing the required examination conducted by the Ministry of Communication.

"We are training one teacher and two students, preferably from the 8th

grade, in each school. The training lasts two months and includes online and offline sessions with specially prepared study materials. The idea now is that each licensed teacher can train up to 50 students, creating a sustainable cycle of learning," added Mahadeva.

HAM licenses enable users to operate radios legally and connect with amateurs worldwide. The Ministry of Communication has emphasised the need for at least one HAM operator in every village and proposed integrating HAM education into school curriculums.

In addition to serving as emergency communication centres, these HAM stations give rural students exposure to global expertise. "Students from rural backgrounds are gaining a

platform to interact with professionals worldwide. This broadens their horizons and boosts their confidence," Mahadeva said.

The schools have also been equipped with walkie-talkies to improve internal communication. "Many of our schools are large, and mobile signals are often unreliable. These walkie-talkies will help staff respond to any untoward incidents quickly," Mahadeva added.

HAM radio's relevance was highlighted during the 2018 Wayanad landslides in Kerala, where it played a crucial role in disaster communication. Recognizing this, KREIS aims to ensure that their schools are equipped and ready to assist during similar situations in Karnataka.

OTS ends, BBMP tightens grip on tax evaders

Civic agency aims to recover over ₹300 crore in unpaid taxes from nearly 2 lakh properties, focusing on major defaulters to enhance compliance

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The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) is gearing up to take stringent action against major commercial property tax defaulters. BBMP Chief Commissioner Tushar Giri Nath announced that following the expiry of the One-Time Settlement (OTS) scheme on November 30, 2024, the civic body has started preparing a comprehensive list of defaulters. The comprehensive plan includes targeting 240 properties across various zones, with zonal commissioners, joint commissioners, and officials tasked with recovering outstanding dues from at least 10 major defaulters each.

"The focus will primarily be on commercial properties, ensuring compliance through the sealing of buildings. Residential properties will not



BBMP prepares defaulters list after OTS scheme ends on Nov 30, 2024

be seized; however, unoccupied residential buildings may face action," Nath said, further adding that a staggering 300 crore remains outstanding from nearly 2 lakh properties, despite the fact that the BBMP oversees a total of 23 lakh khata, of which only 21 lakh are currently under the tax ambit.

"Sealing of properties is important as it sends a strong message to defaulters that tax evasion will not be tolerated. While BBMP is empowered to auction seized properties, due

legal procedures, including sufficient notice periods, will be followed before any auction. Our focus is on recovering dues from commercial properties and ensuring that defaulters are held accountable. We aim to deter such practices and create awareness that BBMP will not take these matters lightly," he said, adding that the civic body may also consider auctioning high-value properties of major tax defaulters if necessary.

On the other hand,

Bengaluru Coalition, expressed dissatisfaction with BBMP's current strategy, labelling it as both inadequate and superficial. In a statement, the coalition argued that sealing properties under the Karnataka Town and Country Planning Act (KTCPA) Section 15(4) has proven ineffective and is more of a token gesture lacking real impact. "The recent actions seem like a farce to show activity, especially in light of recent judicial and appellate orders from the Supreme Court, High Court, and Lokayukta. After dismissing appeals or completing inquiries, the logical next step, as per law, is the demolition of deviations without leniency. The Supreme Court's Civil Appeal 14604 of 2024 clearly directs this. Sealing properties, particularly when Confirmation Orders under Section 248(3) have been pending for over a year, is a regressive move and fails to address the issue meaningfully," the statement read.

Court to decide POSH compliance

The Karnataka High Court has scheduled a hearing on March 17 regarding ANI Technologies' (OLA Cabs) appeal against a single judge's ruling that mandated a Rs 5 lakh compensation payment to a female passenger who experienced harassment from their driver in 2019.

Justice MGS Kamal's previous ruling had determined that the driver should be classified as an Ola employee and instructed the company's Internal Complaints Committee under the POSH Act to investigate the incident. The High Court suspended the single judge's decision on October 4, 2024, following Ola's appeal. Although the

affected woman initially sought to lift the stay order, her legal representative has now agreed to proceed with the final hearing.

Chief Justice N V Anjaria and Justice M I Arun upheld the interim order and set a date for the final hearing. The division bench will examine Ola's argument that POSH Act implementation is questionable since the company does not directly employ drivers.

The original ruling also emphasised adherence to Section 16 of the POSH Act, ensuring the confidentiality of all involved parties. Additionally, ANI Technologies was required to pay Rs 50,000 for legal expenses.

The incident occurred in 2019 when the woman's harassment complaint to ANI Technologies was dismissed. The ICC refused to investigate based on external legal advice claiming a lack of jurisdiction.

Subsequently, the woman petitioned the high court to direct the company to examine her complaint.

The court's ruling also instructed the Karnataka State Road Transport authority to conclude its proceedings within 90 days after providing a hearing opportunity, following their notice to ANI Technologies. Additionally, the State was fined Rs 1 lakh for failing to respond to the petition. **-BMB**

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Date: 05th Jan 2025

Sd/-
Managing Director



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Wildlife experts object set up of elephant camp at Muthathi

Elephant camps may worsen human-elephant conflict, warn wildlife conservationists; they say dept should prioritise strengthening existing physical barriers, improving patrolling

Garima Prasher
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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

Wildlife conservationists have objected to the Karnataka Forest Department's (KFD) plan to set up an elephant camp at Muthathi in Cauvery Wildlife Sanctuary, saying that it is not a solution to mitigate human-elephant conflict cases.

In a written objection sent to Karnataka Forest Minister Eshwar Khandre, Giridhar Kulkarni, a wildlife conservationist has highlighted the recommendation of Elephant Task Force (ETF) that was constituted by Karnataka High Court in 2008 regarding the regulation of tourism in elephant areas, including Muthathi.

According to ETF, tourism is a problem in certain areas, such as Muthathi in Cauvery Wildlife Sanctuary, where an unregulated influx of tourists along certain sections of the road skirting River Cauvery causes direct disturbance to elephants, impedes their access to the river, and creates severe problems of solid-waste disposal.

"ETF, after receiving feedback from various stakeholders, recommended several measures including regulation of tourism in elephant areas (even for Muthathi) which were accepted by both the Government of Karnataka and the HC through its judgement in 2013. KFD's plan violates HC order," said Kulkarni.

Negative impacts of elephant camps

The letter also highlighted that elephant camps inside wildlife areas, in the past, have caused various nega-



Foresters spot two strayed elephants in Nov, 2024

tive impacts, including degrading of surrounding forests due to extensive lopping of vegetation by mahouts. These camps also act as magnets for mahouts, support staff, and their families to settle down, thus creating permanent human settlements in forest areas.

"At present, there is a complete ban on timber operations in wildlife reserves, and hence there is no need for working elephants from the management perspective. Furthermore, domesticated elephants invariably suffer from various diseases that, despite screening, may get passed on to wild elephants and other endangered species. While the welfare of domesticated elephants indeed needs to be addressed, the long-term conservation interests of wild elephants and other endangered species precariously surviving in Protected Areas and facing numerous threats should

not be jeopardised," reads the letter by Kulkarni.

Experts say the attempt to induce pressure inside Cauvery Wildlife Sanctuary in the form of elephant camps would be counterproductive to the various wildlife conservation efforts taken up by the department so far. The camp inside a Protected Area would result in habitat degradation and may also increase the conflict if established from a tourism point of view.

According to Joseph Hoover, former State Board of Wildlife member and founder of the United Conservation Movement and Charitable Trust, the department should focus on measures such as restoration of elephant corridors to bring down conflict cases in the area.

"These are free-ranging elephants and come out due to various reasons like less fodder, fragmented

“While establishing camp to keep jumbos is better solution than giving them away, we don't have adequate resources to manage these camps well

—Ramesh Belagere, wildlife researcher

habitat, and crop pattern. Elephant camps cannot be the answer to conflict. Moreover, the existing camps do not have adequate basic infrastructure such as medical facilities. More often than not, medical equipment is in the camps from zoos and rehabilitation centres on a need basis. If the camp cannot be avoided, the department should at least consider establishing a well-equipped camp," said Hoover.

Ramesh Belagere, a wildlife researcher at the Foundation of Ecology and Education Development, said setting up an elephant camp should be the last resort in the conflict management process. "We are putting too many wild elephants into captivity due to conflicts leading to most of the camps being fully occupied. While establishing a camp to keep captive elephants is a better solution than giving them away to other states owing to fully occupied elephant camps within the state, we do not have adequate resources to manage these camps well. Revenue generated from tourism will not hold for long, as maintaining camp elephants is a costly affair. The department should first focus on strengthening physical barriers and improving patrolling," said Belagere.

'No cause for panic amid HMPV cases'

The detection of two cases of Human Metapneumovirus (HMPV) recently caused concern among the public, despite experts clarifying that the virus has been prevalent for a long time. Adding to this, another case has come to light, revealing that HMPV cases were identified as early as August 2024, well before reports of an alleged outbreak in China.

A senior official confirmed that several HMPV cases were reported between August and November 2024. Children who tested positive during this period were admitted to Sarji Hospital in Shivamogga, where their RT-PCR multiplex tests were conducted at Nanjappa Hospital. All affected children have since been discharged and are reportedly in good health. The Health Department has assured the public that there is no cause for panic and is actively monitoring the situation.

—BMB

HC strikes central rule

Karnataka High Court has invalidated the Electricity (Promoting Renewable Energy Through Green Energy Open Access) Rules, 2022, formulated by the Central Government for the generation, purchase, and consumption of renewable energy. The Court ruled that the Centre lacked the authority under the Electricity Act, 2003, to frame such rules, as the Act specifically grants this power to the Karnataka Electricity Regulatory Commission (KERC).

Justice NS Sanjay Gowda noted that the Act was designed to ensure that regulatory powers. "The Parliament, through the Electricity Act, entrusted the Regulatory Commissions with the exclusive power to oversee open access. The Central Government cannot bypass this legislative mandate by framing its own rules," it stated.

—PTI

Sweet offerings for special day



Saravana Charitable Trust has made arrangements for distributing one lakh laddus on the occasion of Vaikunta Ekadasi in around 50 Sri Venkateswara Swamy Temples across the city. Dispatching of laddus began on Wednesday after performing pooja at Sri Sai Party Hall, Basavanagudi. TA Saravana, the founder of Saravana Charitable Trust told BM, "We have used quality material—pure ghee, cashew nuts, raisins, sugar, gram flour—for making laddus. Around 100 people worked for one week to make one lakh laddus." He said the temple managements have sent their requirements in advance.

—BMB

Will eco-bottles help combat plastic waste?

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TWEETS @BangaloreMirror

According to recent reports, Kerala is set to launch the country's first eco-friendly, compostable water bottles. These biodegradable bottles, marketed as a sustainable alternative to plastic, have garnered attention for their potential to reduce plastic waste. However, experts and environmentalists have expressed mixed reactions, emphasising the need to address deeper issues related to waste management and consumer habits.

Odetta Katrak, founder of Beautiful Bharat, highlighted the challenges posed by compostable



'If mixed with plastic waste, compostable water bottles could disrupt recycling processes'

bottles despite their advantages. "People are excited about these biodegradable bottles, and it sounds great at first. But the aim is to reduce the impact on the environment—will that really happen? More disposables, regardless of the material, consume planetary resources. While biodegradable material is better than

plastic, incorrect disposal could create new problems. If mixed with plastic waste, these bottles could disrupt the recycling process and contribute to greenhouse gas emissions in mixed waste."

She stressed the need for systemic change, urging individuals to adopt reusable solutions. "The real solution is to carry reusable bottles and use dispensers with tumblers at events. Zero-waste water consumption is the only way forward. Innovations like these, while hopeful, can shift the responsibility for change away from consumers, delaying urgent behavioural changes amid climate concerns," Katrak added.

"This is a wonderful step that could drastically reduce plastic production and our dependency on

plastic manufacturers while increasing awareness about sustainability," said Raj, a member of the Ploggers Army. However, he stressed that affordability and accessibility would be critical for large-scale adoption. "The cost must be brought down over time to reach the masses, and there should be strict checks on the quality of materials used."

Raj also pointed out the practical benefits of compostable bottles in reducing litter. "In public places and large-scale events, plastic bottles are a common sight, often discarded improperly. Compostable bottles could address this issue, leading to cleaner streets, parks, and playgrounds. This innovation could be a game-changer, especially in managing waste at large gatherings," he noted.

Naxals lay down arms: Only 1 operative left to surrender?

Prominent operatives announce entry into mainstream society and officially surrender

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TWEETS @sridharvMIRROR

With six naxals surrendering in front of the State Government on Wednesday, the big question is whether Karnataka has emerged as a Naxal-free state? Prominent Naxal operatives announced their entry into mainstream society and subsequently officially surrendered on Wednesday. Police sources said that this marked the near-completion of over two and a half decades of Naxal activities in the state, with only one operative reportedly left to surrender.

The Naxal movement in Karnataka had its roots in the dense forests of the Western Ghats nearly 25 years ago, under the banner of the People's War Group (PWG). It gained momentum with an armed struggle opposing the Kudremukh National Park project, rallying initial sympathy from local tribal communities. Led by leaders like Churukuri Rajkumar, alias Azad, Naxals systematically expanded their operations in districts such as Dakshina Kannada, Udupi, Chikkamagaluru, and Pavagada. The conflict brought gunfire to the tranquil Malnad and coastal regions.

However, the turning point in Karnataka's fight against Naxalism came in December 2002, when the shooting of Chiramma in Koppal Taluk's Menasinahadya which exposed PWG's presence. Subsequent operations culminated in events like the encounter in Hebri Taluk on November 18, 2024, which marked a decisive blow to Naxal insurgency in the state.

Despite early support, Naxals failed to sustain their foothold in Karnataka due to dwindling public backing, lack of leadership, and



Anti Naxal Force personnel conduct combing operation at Shiradi (file photo)

Timeline of Naxal Activities in Karnataka

2001: Naxals entered the Kudremukh National Park region, spreading their propaganda

2002: Armed Naxals were first spotted, with the arrest of a member named Jayanna marking the group's activities

2005: The encounter of Saketh

Rajan dealt a major blow to Naxal activities in Karnataka

2005: Killing of 7 reserve police officers in Pavagada

2008: Murder of a constable near Horanadu

2011: Death of Mahadeva Mane in Belthangady

relentless operations by anti-Naxal forces. The movement gradually disbanded, with many operatives fleeing to Tamil Nadu and Kerala.

Police said that the final surrender of key operatives signals the complete neutralisation of Naxal violence in Karnataka. Over the years, the conflict resulted in 36 deaths, including 17 Naxals, 9 civilians, and 10 police personnel. With Karnataka officially declared nearly Naxal-free, it stands as a testament

to the effectiveness of targeted operations and diminishing support for violent means to address grievances in the state.

ANF's relevance

With Naxal activities coming to a standstill in Karnataka over the past eight years, debates are surfacing about the need for the Anti-Naxal Force (ANF). Though some Naxals who had fled to Kerala and Tamil Nadu recently attempted to return

to the Western Ghats, their armed rebellion capabilities have significantly diminished. The ANF was established in 2006 following key events, including the 2005 encounter of Saketh Rajan, the mastermind behind Karnataka's Naxal operations, and the killing of tribal leader P Sheshaiah in 2005. The government had invested heavily in the force, equipping it to tackle insurgency effectively. However, with the current eradication of Naxal activities, discussions about disbanding the ANF are gaining momentum.

Government's next move

A police official said, "Despite calls to disband the ANF, experts warn that dormant Naxal activities could resurface. History shows that Naxal movements have occasionally re-emerged in other regions after a period of dormancy, prompting the government to tread cautiously."

Assets have spilled over

Karnataka Lokayukta Police conducted simultaneous search operations across the state on Wednesday, in connection with disproportionate asset (DA) cases against eight government officers. The searches, carried out at over 38 locations, targeted residences, offices, and properties linked to the accused officers. Key findings include substantial assets seized from M Shobha, Joint Commissioner, Transport Department, Bengaluru. Searches at six locations uncovered immovable assets valued at 45.36 lakh, including a house, a site, and 21 acres of agricultural land. Movable assets worth 2.63 crore, comprising 35,300 in cash, 60 lakh in ornaments, 20 lakh in vehicles, and 1.6 crore in bank deposits and LIC policies, were also seized, totaling 3.09 crore.

Assets worth 5.02 crore were seized from S Raju, a retired Regional Transport Officer from the Yelahanka TRO office. Searches at five locations revealed immovable assets valued at 4.27 crore, including two houses, one site, and four acres of agricultural land. Movable assets, including 1.33 lakh in cash, ornaments worth 57.72 lakh, and household articles valued at 15 lakh, were also confiscated. —BMB

Man murders wife, daughter

A 42-year-old home guard surrendered at the Peenya police station after killing his wife, daughter and a cousin at their residence at Jalahalli cross on Wednesday.

The accused, identified as Ganga Raju, was working as a home guard at Hebbagodi police station. He murdered his wife identified as Bhagya (36), their daughter Navya (19) and her elder sister Hemavati (23) at their residence early this morning.

According to the police, the accused bludgeoned his wife and the other two victims to death and fled the scene. The police also reported that Ganga Raju was suspicious of his wife's character, and so he had killed his wife and the girls and later that day surrendered to the police.

The Peenya police have conducted a spot inspection. —BMB

Companies use nature, but not interested in sharing benefits

Garima Prasher
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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

The Karnataka Biodiversity Board's (KBB) efforts to implement the Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) scheme under the Biodiversity (BD) Act are going nowhere. Companies using natural resources or 'codified traditional knowledge' are showing little interest in the scheme.

According to data gathered by the Karnataka Biodiversity Board (KBB), the number of applications that the board received from such companies under the scheme last year has dropped. From April 2023 to March 2024, KBB received 175 Form-I applications and 80 ABS applications from

various companies across the state. However, between April 2022 and March 2023, the total number of Form-I applications received by KBB was 244, and a hundred companies applied under the scheme.

The board has received Rs 1.75 lakh and Rs 1.5 crore through Form-I applications and ABD applications.

The ABS scheme is about equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the use of natural resources. As per the BD Act, the users of biological resources are supposed to share a percentage of profits with local communities. This percentage, known as ABS, must be disbursed to local biodiversity management committees for conservation purposes or to promote the livelihoods of local people from where natural resources were accessed.

KBB provides opportunities for



Users of resources must share a percentage of profits with locals

companies to share their benefits. However, it also mandates these companies to first register under the scheme by submitting a 'Form-I application' with KBB in order to provide information regarding the usage

of natural resources and seek permission before moving ahead.

Experts say the fewer number of companies registering under the scheme indicates a lack of strict implementation of the rules put in

place more than two decades ago. "The number of companies registering under the ABS scheme should increase, especially when KBB has been in existence for more than 20 years now. However, strict implementation of the scheme by the Board is one reason behind this failure," said a city-based expert.

In 2023-24, KBB conducted 15 training programs and awareness sessions across the state. Over the last 20 years, 1,152 training programs have been conducted. However, some highlight a lack of clarity on certain aspects of the bill after a few amendments in 2023. Experts say some proposals in the bill such as decriminalisation of violations under the BD Act and exemption from the provision of ABS might have led to lower registration numbers.

District Registrars have teeth, but no bite

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

such cancellation in the relevant books and indexes.

Any person aggrieved by an order of the District Registrar can go for an appeal to the Inspector General of Registration within 30 days from the date of cancellation of the document and the Inspector General of Registration shall pass an order confirming, modifying or cancelling the order of the District Registrar.

However, some property owners are complaining that the District Registrars and higher authorities have failed to redress their grievances. For example, Yatish M, a resident of Jayanagar, has lodged complaints with the District Registrar of Shivajinagar, Minister for Revenue Krishna Byre Gowda, and the then Inspector General of Registration and Commissioner of Stamps Mamatha BR on August 7, 2023, requesting to cancel the sale deeds bearing survey nos. 19/2, 65, 94 in Vijinapura, KR Puram Hobli, Bangalore East Taluk.

"Despite having been in correspondence with the District Registrar and others, nothing has been done either to cancel the sale deeds registered based on fake documents or to stop registering the sale deeds of properties pertaining to those survey numbers.

The District Registrar and Inspector

General of Registration have been telling me that they have been waiting for the guidelines to act on my complaints. I do not know when the government will issue guidelines," said Yatish M.

Dhananjaya Padmanabhachar, Sanchalak, Karnataka Home Buyers Forum, said that the district registrars (DRs) are empowered to take action if they find any fraudulent registration of the documents at the sub registrar office. Section 82 and 83 of the Registration Act gives the DR the authority to initiate even criminal proceedings against the people involved in the fraud, he said.

"The district registrars need to exercise their powers given to them to reduce the fraudulent registration of documents happening in the sub registrar offices. From Karnataka Home Buyers Forum, we had made numerous representations to the IGR in the past to investigate fraudulent registration of documents especially Deed of Declaration (DoD) without following the Karnataka Apartment Ownership Act 1972 in the true spirit. As the government has empowered the officers with law, we hope registration scams will come down," said Padmanabhachar.

Meanwhile, Nithin, Manager, District Registrar Office, Shivajinagar, said that he would look into the matter.

Minister for Revenue Krishna Byre Gowda was not available for comment.

Fatal cake essence

Three jail inmates in Mysuru prison have died after consuming food essence for cake, police said on Wednesday.

While Madesh from Satagahalli in Mysuru died on Tuesday night, Nagaraj and Ramesh from Chamarajanagar breathed their last on Wednesday.

They consumed the essence on December 28 and have been under medical care since then.

"The essence was brought to make the New Year cake. These three people, who work in the bakery department, drank it, probably for a kick," a source told PTI.

The trio did not tell anyone after consuming it. The matter came to light after their condition deteriorated and they were taken to the hospital, the source added.

PTI

SOS without a clue

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

and individuals pressing the emergency button without cause. Such actions can divert resources away from genuine emergencies, potentially compromising public safety.

Between June 2023 and August 2024, the city's command centre reported receiving over 50 actionable calls, contrasted by a staggering 2,500 prank alerts during the same period. "We often see cases where people press the panic button and leave without giving any reason, sometimes even children do that," a staff member noted.

Data from the initial six months of this initiative revealed that no women or children utilised the kiosks to seek help. Instead, approximately 50 men used the islands, primarily to report disputes or emergencies.

Critical asset

The Safety Islands are strategically located in vulnerable areas, such as bus stops and slums, to provide immediate assistance to those in distress.

They are directly connected to the Emergency Response Support System (ERSS) via a panic button, ensuring prompt communication with the police command centre.

These Safety Islands have helped in addressing a variety of cases, ranging from theft, pick-pocketing, and vehicle theft to incidents of rash driving, drug abuse, accidents, fires, and even stabbings. They have also been instrumental in resolving public quarrels, saving lives, and locating missing persons. Once an alert is triggered, a Hoysala patrol vehicle is promptly dispatched to the location, and the jurisdictional police station takes over the case for further investigation.

Officials reveal how they have proven to be an important facility in providing quick responses to emergencies. "Whether it's a public dispute or a life-threatening situation like a fire or stabbing, the system ensures immediate action. Each call is treated with utmost seriousness, and our team works closely with the jurisdictional police to address the issue swiftly," a staff member stated.

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personal

CHANGE OF NAME

I Manjula Babu W/O, Babu.g.h R/o No-598/99, 4th Main Road, Muthyala Nagara, msrit, Bengaluru-560054 have changed my name to Manjula Miryam.

I, Mohammed Azeez, R/at No 1964, 10th Cross Vinobha Nagar Kadu Gondana Halli - 560045, Have Changed My Name to S Mohammed Azeez, for All purpose.

I, Vaibhav Goenka S/o Vinay Kumar Goenka R/o Purba Fountain Square, Q-1003, Varthur main road, Doddanakkundi, Bengaluru 560037 have changed my name to Vaibhav Kumar Goenka Affidavit Dt.08/01/2024 notary Harisha G, B'luru

I, Nitesh R/o SS Elite No.2-17, Flat.203, Ambalipura Bellandur gate, Sarjapur road, Bengaluru 560103 have changed my name to Nitesh Krishna Rathod Affidavit Dt.08/01/2025 notary Harisha G, B'luru

I, Pooja Singh S W/o, Praveen Kumar P R/o #204 Laggere Main Road Mei Colony Laggere, Bengaluru - 560058 have changed my name to Pooja Praveen Kumar for all purposes.

I, FREDRIC MENEZES S/O, Late Jockhim Menezes, residing at No. 95, 1st Cross, near Ganapathi Temple, Roopnagara, Mysore, Karnataka-570026, have changed my name to FREDRIC MENEZES, vide affidavit dated 07.01.2025, sworn before notary Harisha G, Bangalore.

I, Abdul Kadar Puthiyapurayil Mohameed R/o 34/7, Edenquest Apt, Flat.001, 11th cross, Papareddy palya, Nagarabhavi, B'luru 560072 have changed my name to Abdul Khadar Puthiyapurayil Mohammed Affidavit Dt.08/01/2024 notary Harisha G, B'luru

I, Sangeetha Kumari S/o Mahaveer Kumar Bhansali R/o Flat.404, Comfort Mahaveer Apt, 80/1 Diagonal Road V Puram Bengaluru 560004 have changed my name to Sangeetha Kumari Bhansali Affidavit Dt.08/01/2025 notary Harisha G, B'luru

I, Mahaveer Kumar S/o Heerachand Bhansali R/o Flat.404, Comfort Mahaveer Apt, 80/1 Diagonal Road V Puram Bengaluru 560004 have changed my name to Mahaveer Kumar Bhansali Affidavit Dt.08/01/2025 notary Harisha G, B'luru

I Nivi Niraj Narayan W/O, Manish Kumar Sinha R/o 6j, Rbd Stillwater Apt, Silver County Road, Haralur, Bengaluru 560102 have changed my name to Nivi Narayan.

I, Payal Kumari Manak Chand W/o Abhishek P, R/o J-14, 3rd cross, Near Jain Temple, L N Puram, Bengaluru 560021 have changed my name to Payal Manak Chand (M Payal) Affidavit Dt.08/01/2024 notary Harisha G, B'luru

I Jyothilakshmi R/o # 69, 7th Main, 4th Block, 2nd Phase, BSK 3rd Stage, B'luru 560085 have changed my minor daughter name from Ms. Taniya Gurusiddesh Kote to Taniya Gurusiddesh Koti for all purposes

I Prashant Naik S/O, Timmappa Naik R/o No.17 Th 3rd Floor, 4th Main Vinayaka Layout, Chikkabasavanapura, Battarahalli, Bangalore -560049 have changed my name to Prashant Timmappa Naik .

I, Srihari Chengalaraya S/o Chengalaraya, R/o 44, 2nd Cross, Silver Oak Layout, JPNagar 7th phase, Bengaluru 78., hereby declare that I am also addressed as Srihari Naidu, as both the names belong to me. The said version is already mentioned in a notarized affidavit (7/2/2023), before notary

WE, CHANDRASHEKHARA GOWDA and SHALINI SHANKARAGOWDA, residing at Ramanagar, have changed our son name from MEDHANSH to VARUSH KAVAN GOWDA, vide affidavit dated 7/1/2025 before Notary K.S.Bammappanavar, Bengaluru

WE, RUBA CHANDRAN GOVINDARAJAN and SHILPA CHANDRAN, residing at: A-403, MANTRI WEBCITY, HENNUR BAGALUR ROAD, K N A R A Y A N A P U R A , BENGALURU 560077, have changed our minor son's name from NARUN to NARUN CHANDRAN, vide affidavit dated 06/01/2025 before Notary S.N. MADHU, Bangalore



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Dogs have lived alongside humans for thousands of years. They have been used to hunt, guard, herd and perform many other tasks, but today they mainly act as companions. While their lives today may seem easy compared with their ancestors, they still face many stresses – including visits to the vet.

A couple of years ago, researchers in France showed that how a dog owner behaves at the vet affects their pet's stress levels. The study showed that negative owner behaviour, such as scolding, increased dog anxiety during a veterinary examination.

But before our recent research at Queen's University Belfast, no one had investigated the effect of owner stress on their dogs in a controlled environment. Our study differs from the research above, as it looks specifically at the effect of owner stress, measured through heart rate changes, on the stress experienced by their dog when at a vet.

Twenty-eight owners and their dogs took part in our experiment. Both owners and dogs wore heart-rate monitors throughout the experiment so that we could monitor and record their heart rate and heart-rate variability – to measure stress levels.

We then exposed the owners to either a stressful or a stress-relieving intervention and monitored the effect it had on them as well as on their dogs. The stressful intervention consisted of a digital stress test, which required owners to perform a mental arithmetic task, as well as a verbal presentation task. The stress-relieving intervention was a five-minute guided breathing meditation video.

We found that dogs' heart rates decreased as they got used to the veterinary clinic environment. This suggests that vets should give dogs time to get used to the clinic before examining them. Not only will this reduce their stress, it may also improve the validity of any examinations or tests performed, as measures such as heart and respiratory rates can be elevated as a result of heightened stress.

Emotional contagion

We also found that changes in

Partner in worry

Your stress levels affect your dog – new study



the owner's heart rate from before the experiment to during the experiment could predict the heart rate changes of their dog. If the owner's heart rate increased or

decreased during the experiment, their dog's heart rate was also likely to increase or decrease in tandem.

These results suggest that

dogs may recognise stress in their owners, and this could influence their own stress levels, through the process of "emotional contagion". This is a phenomenon where people, and other animals, may "catch" or mimic the emotions and behaviour of those around them, either consciously or unconsciously.

It may also indicate that dogs look to their owners to inform their response to new environments. Owners were asked not to interact with their dogs for the duration of the experiment. So any assessment of owner stress made by their dogs was done without direct communication between owner and pet.

So what does this mean for the average dog owner? If our stress has the potential to influence our dogs, then this should be considered when we visit the vet. If vets help owners feel more calm while attending the clinic, it could help their dogs feel more at ease, too.

A holistic approach to veterinary care, where the animal, their owner and the environment are all taken into consideration, is likely to result in the best welfare outcomes.

While our research primarily focused on the bond between dogs and their owners, a recent study investigating canine behaviour found that the smell of sweat from a stressed human, who was unfamiliar to the dog, affected the learning and cognition of that dog during a cognitive bias test. The test measures whether an animal is in a positive or negative emotional state, and whether they are likely to make decisions with an optimistic or pessimistic outlook. This shows that dogs may be affected by the stress of strangers, as well as that of their owners.

What is clear from our latest research is that dogs are perceptive animals that are influenced by the world and the people around them. People caring for or working with dogs should bear in mind that their own stress may affect that of their dogs.

(By Aoife Byrne, University of Nottingham and Gareth Arnott, Queen's University Belfast, *The Conversation*)



All you need to know about...

Skincare for winter

"Cold weather often deprives your skin of its moisture and leaving it itchy and uncomfortable. Dryness of skin is one of the most overlooked conditions that flares up during spells of winter because of low temperature and humidity. The skin feels rough, scaly, and may develop itchiness, fine lines, or patches," Dr Nikhil Bangale, Bayer Consumer Health, explains why one must not overlook skin concerns during winter. He shares three easy tips to take care of your skin this winter.

Moisturise day and night

Moisturisers are key in winter to combat dryness caused by cold weather. Look for oil-based formulas with ingredients like glycerine, hyaluronic acid, ceramides, and niacinamide. These help attract moisture, lock in hydration, and repair the skin's outer layer to prevent cracks and dryness.

Nourish from within

A balanced diet and proper hydration are essential for healthy skin. Include foods rich in Vitamin A (like sweet potatoes and carrots) and Vitamin C (such as citrus fruits and guavas) to retain moisture, improve skin immunity, and boost collagen production. Omega-3 fatty acids, found in fish and flaxseeds, also aid in skin hydration. Multivitamin supplements with these nutrients can further enhance skin health, complementing a balanced diet.

Watch your bathing habits

Frequent baths in cold water can damage the skin. Use lukewarm water, and limit your showering time to 5-10 minutes, and avoid strong soaps. Pat your skin dry gently and apply moisturiser immediately after bathing to lock in moisture. If dry skin persists or worsens with scales, rashes, or discoloration, it could signal an underlying condition like dermatitis or eczema.

—Femina

MIRRORLIGHTS

Drink coffee during morning hours to get good heart health

While coffee offers several health benefits, the best time to drink the hot beverage is morning hours, claims a study on Wednesday.

The research, published in the European Heart Journal, showed that people who drink coffee in the morning have a lower risk of dying from heart disease. They also have a lower overall mortality risk compared to people who drink coffee all day long.

Researchers from Tulane University in the US showed morning coffee drinkers were 16 per cent less likely to die of any cause and 31 per cent less likely to die of cardiovascular disease.

However, no reduction in risk

was found for people who drink coffee all day, compared to non-coffee drinkers.

"This is the first study testing coffee drinking timing patterns and health outcomes. Our findings indicate that it's not just whether you drink coffee or how much you drink, but the time of day when you drink coffee, that's important," said Dr Lu Qi, Professor at Tulane. In the study, researchers analysed data on 40,725 adults between 1999 and 2018.

As part of the study, participants were asked about all the food and drink they consumed on at least one day, including whether they drank coffee, how much, and

when. It also included a sub-group of 1,463 people who were asked to complete a detailed food and drink diary for a full week.

The team linked the information with records of deaths and causes of death for nine to 10 years.

More than one in three people in the study were morning coffee drinkers (they primarily drank coffee before midday), and less than one in four drank coffee throughout the day (morning, afternoon, and evening). These were compared with 48 per cent non coffee drinkers.

Morning coffee drinkers benefitted from the lower risks whether they were moderate

drinkers (two to three cups) or heavy drinkers (more than three cups). Light morning drinkers (one cup or less) benefitted from a smaller decrease in risk, the researchers said.

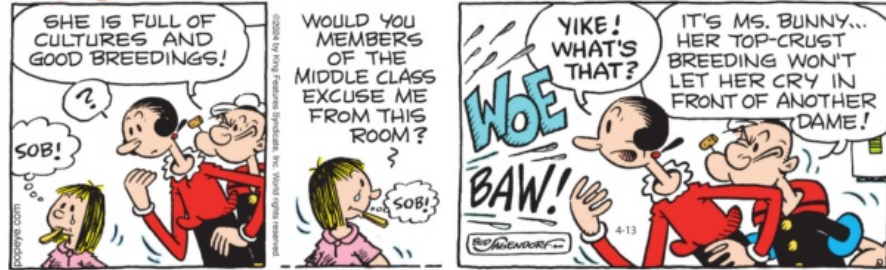
However, the study doesn't give the mechanism behind how drinking coffee in the morning reduces the risk of death from cardiovascular disease.

"A possible explanation is that consuming coffee in the afternoon or evening may disrupt circadian rhythms and levels of hormones such as melatonin. This, in turn, leads to changes in cardiovascular risk factors such as inflammation and blood pressure," Qi said, calling for further studies to validate the findings.

—IANS

COMICS

Popeye



Bizarrotrip



Diamond Lil



Hart of the city



Crankschaft



Mutts



WHAT YOUR STARS SAY TODAY

Aries Mar 21 - Apr 20

Today, you may feel happy. Property-related issues with siblings might get resolved. Your professional contacts may play a key role in business expansion. You are likely to meet an influential person who can help grow your business. Be cautious with investments in fixed assets, as they may turn into dead assets. A short work-related trip may be expected.



Leo Jul 24 - Aug 23

Today, you may be busy with social gatherings, where you may meet old friends. Your network could grow stronger, benefiting you professionally in the near future. Those in export/import, glamour, or artefact industries may perform better today. Students are likely to excel in their studies, and lovebirds will enjoy happy moments together.



Sagittarius Nov 23 - Dec 22

Today, you are blessed by the moon, and you may find inner strength to make difficult decisions at work. Any disputes with partners are likely to be resolved now. Singles may find a good match with the help of relatives or friends, and you may receive external investments for your business.



Taurus Apr 21 - May 20

You are blessed by the moon today; it may guide you toward success. Your savings are likely to increase, improving your financial health. You may also be busy with family and friends, and you might plan an outing or adventure tour. However, your child's health may cause concern.



Virgo Aug 24 - Sep 23

Today is a good day. You may have strong support from your family. Your family business could expand, increasing your family's social status. You may also consider expanding your family with a new child, which will strengthen your family bond. Students may apply for scholarships for higher studies.



Capricorn Dec 23 - Jan 20

Today, you are blessed by the moon, which may increase your confidence, positively reflecting in your work. You may receive good news in legal matters, and money that was stuck could be recovered, boosting your savings. Children's health is likely to improve now. You are advised to avoid unnecessary arguments in domestic life.



Gemini May 21 - Jun 21

Today, you may feel full of vitality and inner strength. You are likely to make great plans for the growth of your family business, and with the blessings of your elders, you can efficiently implement these plans with your team's support. Your wisdom will help you make important decisions, boosting your social status.



Libra Sep 24 - Oct 22

Today, you may feel more spiritual. Destiny may be on your side; you may see gains from past investments. Your bond with your boss may improve, leading to potential promotions. You may also receive good news from a sibling. It is advised that you be careful with your tone in love and personal life, as harsh words could affect relationships.



Aquarius Jan 21 - Feb 19

Today, with blessings on your side, you may experience gains from past investments. You might plan to renovate your house or office and invest in intellectual assets like books or further studies. Singles may find their soulmate in the same field. Natives in research, education, or agriculture may perform well today.



Cancer Jun 22 - July 23

Today, you may face health issues, and lack of sleep may leave you mentally tired. You may struggle to focus, which could affect your work commitments. It is advised to avoid rushing while driving or going on adventurous tours. Also, refrain from spending money on unnecessary items.



Scorpio Oct 23 - Nov 22

Today, you may experience sleeplessness, leaving you feeling lazy and careless. This could negatively impact your inner strength and create nervousness at work, affecting ongoing projects. It is best that you avoid investments in unproductive assets. Refrain from eating spicy food, which may disrupt your digestive system. Be cautious while driving.



Pisces Feb 20 - Mar 20

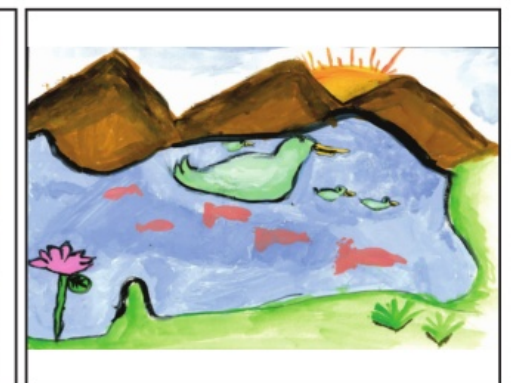
Today, you may feel unhappy and struggle with arrogance, affecting both your personal and professional life. You may feel pressure and detachment from your responsibilities. Impatience may arise at work. It's advised to take care of your parents and postpone important work-related decisions.



KIDZONE



Gokula Swamy Bengaluru

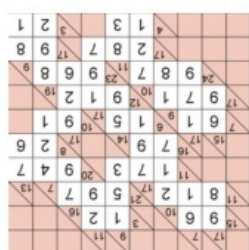


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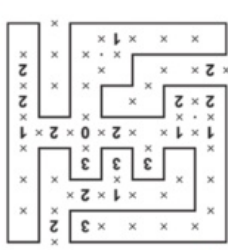
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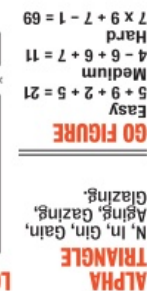
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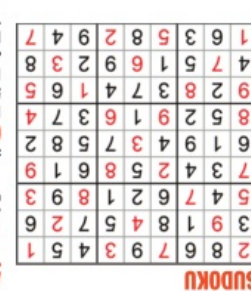
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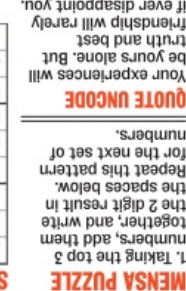
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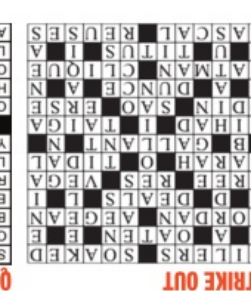
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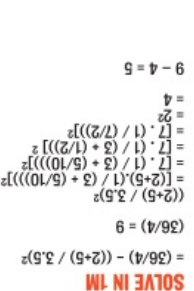
QUICK



STRIKE OUT



BULLS & COWS



SOLVE IN 1M

New face

Triptii no longer on board Aashiqui 3... What's the buzz?

Triptii Dimri was supposed to reunite with Kartik Aaryan in Aashiqui 3 after the announcement last year and a muhurat shot. But on Tuesday, it was reported that she is no longer part of the film, with different stories about why she left.

On Tuesday, it was reported that Triptii would no longer star in Aashiqui 3. The film, which had been facing a title-related dispute, has been postponed indefinitely. The report suggested that Triptii decided to leave the project due to the delays in the shoot.

However, now a report in Hindustan Times stated that the makers of Aashiqui 3 decided not to cast Triptii after her initial look test. According to their source, the film requires the female lead to portray innocence, and the team felt that Triptii's recent roles no longer fit the pure, fresh image needed for the romantic film.

The report further explained that Triptii's image change after Animal contributed to the makers' decision, as they felt she no longer suited the role. Aashiqui is a legendary love story, and the makers didn't believe Triptii fit the film's requirements. Additionally, her recent films haven't created much buzz or performed well at the box office, which also influenced their choice.

However, neither Triptii Dimri nor the makers have provided an official statement on the situation, making it difficult to determine which version is accurate or if the truth lies somewhere in between. Further the report stated that industry sources suggest that the situation is likely a mix of both factors: Triptii didn't want to wait, while the makers are now seeking a 'fresher' face. When she was initially cast, she was a newcomer, but with the delay in shooting, she has since appeared in two more films.

Originally set to be co-produced by Bhushan Kumar and Mukesh Bhatt, Aashiqui 3 underwent changes when Kumar announced in March that he would be producing it alone.

—ETimes



Teaser unveiled

The teaser of Apayavide Echcharike (Attention: Danger Ahead) was unveiled recently. The movie's team had released a motion poster and a song – Bachelor Baduku too, which created a buzz. The song depicts the lifestyle of bachelors. The movie's teaser hints that this is going to be an adventurous horror-thriller. The teaser shows the movie has all ingredients to keep the audiences on the edge of their seats at theatres. The eerie setting has already created curiosity



among movie buffs.

Abhijith Thirithahalli has written the script, screenplay apart from helming the movie. A major portion of the film was shot in a dense forest. The movie is expected to arrive in theaters on February 7 across the state.

Vikash Uthaiyah of tele serial Annaiah fame and Radha Bhagavathi of Amrutha Dhare fame are the lead pair in the movie while Raghav Kodachadri and Mithun Thirithahalli play key characters.

"The movie will entertain the audiences. I have been associated with Sandalwood for more than a decade. It is my maiden movie. I worked on the script for eight years. I am confident audiences will watch this movie," said Abhijith.

Comeback

Prabhakar aka Kalakeya Prabhakar makes a comeback after a gap of four years. Prabhakar is known for playing the villain in Telugu, Tamil and Kannada movies. His last Kannada movie Bicchugatti: Chapter 1 released in 2020. Now, he plays a different character in the forthcoming Mugila Mallige, helmed by RK Gandhi.

"We are very happy to have Prabhakar on the board. He is known for acting in Telugu, Tamil, and Kannada movies including Balakrishna's Akhanda, Allu Arjun's DJ: Duvvada Jagannadham, and



Prabhas' Bahubali. He participated in a song shooting along with Monica and Kiran Kumar recently," the director said.

Prabhakar has also played the villain in Kannada movies Nata Sarvabhouma, Brundavana, and Gajakesari. Mugila Mallige is being bankrolled by A Nagaraj Reddy under the ANR Pictures banner. It was shot in and around Hoskote, Kambalipura Kateramma Temple, Kulathur, Bhaktharahalli, Gattiganabbe, Poojena Agrahara. According to the director, Thriller Manju plays an emotional character in the movie. The technical team consists of Abhinandan Shetty (cinematography), Anirudha Shastri (music), Thriller Manju (stunts).

New mom style

Bollywood star Deepika Padukone has become a symbol of empowerment for new mothers with her latest appearances after welcoming her daughter Dua with hubby Ranveer Singh. After ringing in the New Year and celebrating her birthday, Deepika was spotted returning to Mumbai with Ranveer and Dua.

The star couple put their baby in the car before obliging the photographers by posing for the cameras. Deepika opted for an oversized striped shirt paired with baggy trousers and completed her look with a sleek bun and statement sunglasses. Ranveer, on the other hand, opted for an all-black look with matching black shades.

Since videos of their airport spotting went viral on social media, many fans took to the comments section to share their admiration for the beauty for prioritising her well-being and embracing her post-pregnancy journey.

Fans celebrate Padukone's approach, applauding her for not rushing to conform to unrealistic beauty standards often expected of celebrities. One fan commented, "Post-pregnancy DP is so sweet. I'm glad she's taking her time with her body and not succumbing to any pressure. Speaks volumes for so many women out there."

—ETimes



Jacob Elordi on a roll

Hollywood actor Jacob Elordi is in talks to star in Ridley Scott's upcoming movie 'The Dog Stars' for 20th Century. The film is a post-apocalyptic thriller.

The actor is said to replace Paul Mescal, who ran into scheduling issues. Mescal, who stars in Scott's 'Gladiator' sequel, had been poised to star in the film about a catastrophic flu virus that wipes out nearly all of humanity, reports 'Variety'. But he was forced to drop out due to filming Sam Mendes' Beatles anthology. The project is based on a 2012 novel by Peter Heller, with its screenplay written by Mark L. Smith, and



is expected to be Scott's next film after a Bee Gees biopic for Paramount.

As per 'Variety', if his deal closes, as is expected, Jacob Elordi would play a pilot named Hig who befriends a cranky gunman as they try to outlast a roaming band of scavengers called Reapers.

In December, Scott hinted Mescal's involvement in the project was precarious.

—IANS

WHEN MALAIKA TAKES THE FLOOR

Bollywood star Malaika Arora stole the spotlight at the wedding reception of renowned Sufi singer Bismil and his bride Shifa Khan.

The celebration, held in Jaipur, was a close family and friends affair, and Malaika's performance became one of the most talked about moments across social media.

During the reception, Malaika electrified the audience with her dance to the iconic song 'Munni Badnaam' and her presence and the dance added an extra layer of glamour to the celebrations.

Clad in a shimmering golden lehenga, she made a grand entrance with a veil covering her face. As she began to dance, the guests erupted in cheers. Her performance was perfectly blended with grace and energy, dancing to her signature moves that fans loved for years.

Apart from 'Munni Badnaam', Malaika surprised everyone by also performing to the iconic 'Chaiyya Chaiyya'. She executed the famous hook steps flawlessly, further making the crowd cheer louder. Her performances also included other tracks like 'Baat Ban Jaye' and 'Anarkali Disco Chali', keeping the energy high throughout the night.

—ETimes

